**Assault on an American missionary**

116. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI C.O. POULOSE:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the physical assault on an American missionary, Mr. Joseph Cooper in Trivandrum;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken to book the culprits and punish them;

(c) whether it is a fact that Mr. Cooper has been ordered to leave the country for allegedly violating the visa rules;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken to ensure that foreign citizens abide by the restrictions and do not violate the laws of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE INTHE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) it is reported that the American national was attacked by a group of locals when he was returning with two others after attending a religious convention in a remote Harijan Colony in Kallimanoor, Thiruvanathapuram District on 13/14 January, 2003, for his alleged provocative speeches in the convention hurting the sentiments of other religions. In this connection, a case has been registered against 9 persons under Sections 147,149, 326 IPC read with Section 25/27 of Arms Act and Section 3 of Explosive Substances Act.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The American national was issued a Leave India Notice under the Foreigners Act, 1946 for allegedly violating visa rules.

(e) Powers have been delegated to Foreigners Regional Registration Officers/Foreigners Registration Officers/Civil Authorities of State to take appropriate action against individuals who violate visa rules. They are empowerd to issue Leave India Notices including deportation orders to foreigners for violation of visa rules. Also such foreigners are debarred from entry into India in future.